

turned with a small, dark-faced man in a warm sweater. He greeted me in reasonably good English and told me that his comrades were sorry not to be able to talk with me. He was the radio operator. Soon we were standing at the broad window of the cabin and talking about the war.

“When the war ended, I was in the merchant marine because we no longer had a navy,” he explained somewhat apologetically. “Before that I was on a battleship, but your airmen sank her. We had little time to abandon her and were in the water some forty hours. Many of us drowned. When we reached the Australian beach only fifty of us were left. We had to wait for a ship to pick us up. But Japan had few ships left by that time, and we waited many months before one came and brought us back. The navy needed no more men, all the ships were sunk, and there were no shipyards left to build new ones. Then they made me a radioman for the merchant marine in the Inland Sea.

“My younger brother ended up better. He was the best of all of us in the family, so strong, so brave. They took him into the air force, and he was very happy. But he had received only one mission—to attack your cruiser and explode his plane on her deck. They chose the very best for this task. But he miscalculated, missed the target, and dropped into the ocean alongside the ship. I do not know where he is now, but he must be happy—he was always such a good boy. Perhaps he is living at the bottom of the ocean with other brave boys, hunting and fishing. Who knows? He liked so much to fish from his boat. . . .”

The radioman had a mild, high-pitched voice like a child's, and it seemed as though, gazing through the window, he saw his brother roaming in darkness at the bottom of the sea. After a brief silence he said smilingly, as if apologizing for a sad story:

“I am also a very happy man. Tomorrow, in Osaka, I will get my pay and go with my two boys to buy Christmas tree decorations.”

“Are you a Christian?” I asked him.

“No, I am a Buddhist. But my boys go to a Catholic school, the best school in the city. I was uneasy at first about what they would learn there. But one day my older boy came home from school and said, ‘Do you know, Daddy, what the teacher told us? He told us that God is love.’ This is what I wanted them to learn. . . . God is Love and Love is God. I am very happy.”

He went to the map, exchanged a few words with the helmsman, and returned to me.

“Hiroshima is just north of here, only thirty miles away. I was on the ship at this point when the bomb went off. I thought of an earthquake and volcano eruption. . . . That light was so bright and the clouds so white. But then we learned this was the bomb. . . . Some of my people say you should not have used it against us. I asked my-